

VZCZCXRO3311  
PP RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHGI RUEHJO RUEHMR RUEHRN  
DE RUEH KI #0265/01 0611216  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 021216Z MAR 07  
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5723  
INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE  
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC  
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK  
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE

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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE  
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DEPT FOR AF/RSA DANIEL EPSTEIN

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [ECON](#) [EFIN](#) [ENRG](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [CHG](#) [CG](#)  
SUBJECT: DRC/CHINESE RELATIONS BRIEF UPDATE

REF: STATE 24937

¶1. (SBU) Per reftel, post provides the following updated summary of Chinese activities in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

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Diplomatic Activities  
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¶2. (SBU) China was one of 14 members of the Committee to Accompany the Transition (CIAT), an advisory body to the 2003-2006 transitional government created by the Sun City accords. The U.S., along with other Security Council and neighboring nations, also participated. The CIAT, a forum for sustained dialogue with the DRC transitional government, terminated with the installation of an elected president in December 2006.

¶3. (SBU) President Kabila led a March 2005 trade delegation to China. Vice President Yerodia headed the Congolese delegation to the November 2006 China-Africa Summit in Beijing.

¶4. (SBU) China issued approximately 7,000 tourist, business, and student visas to Congolese in 2006, up from 4,000 in 2005.

¶5. (SBU) China has continued to provide assistance to the DRC. In January 2006, Chinese experts assisted the Congolese parastatal utility Regediso with water inspections in Eastern Kasai province. In June 2006, a Chinese-built hospital opened in Ndjili, an impoverished Kinshasa suburb. In January 2007, China donated USD 64,000 in office supplies to the new DRC government. Chinese construction companies rehabilitated roads in North and South Kivu provinces in 2006 with World Bank funding.

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Economic/Commercial Activities  
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¶6. (SBU) China has strong interests in the DRC mining sector, particularly in Katanga province where China is aggressively pursuing copper and cobalt interests. (Note: China is one of the world's biggest producers of processed cobalt; 85 percent of the raw material comes from the DRC. End note.) Aside from one joint venture with Congolese state mining company Gecamines, the numerous Chinese actors involved in the DRC mining industry are independent buyers who export ore.

¶7. (SBU) China has supported several large infrastructure and road building projects in the DRC, including a road in Bas-Congo province and a rail line to the port of Benguela in Angola. The projects are typically self-financed; the Chinese lend the DRC money for the project, and the DRC hires a Chinese company to do the work. Post has no information on the terms of the loans or their impact on the DRC's debt. China has also expressed interest in re-opening a munitions plant in the DRC.

¶8. (SBU) There are over 600 members of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in the DRC. There is also a flourishing Mutual Assistance Association for Chinese in Congo.

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Military Relations  
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¶9. (SBU) President Joseph Kabila trained briefly in China during his days as a rebel and is known to have favorable views towards China. In 2006, Congolese national army (FARDC) officers received training in China, and China provided tactical training to the FARDC in the DRC.

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Potential Future Areas of Dialogue and Cooperation  
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¶10. (SBU) With the installation of the new government, the U.S. focus has turned from elections to such issues as security and justice sector reform, democracy and good governance, and humanitarian assistance. Given Chinese

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unwillingness to "meddle in the internal affairs" of other countries, it is doubtful that the Chinese will engage actively with the U.S. and other donors in issues related to corruption and governance. Dialogue on humanitarian needs in the fields of health  
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